



May 2, 2011

Michigan Supreme Court  
PO Box 30052  
Lansing, MI 48900

Re: ADM File No. 2010-05

Dear Justices of the Court,

I am writing to you in support of the changes to the Michigan Court Rules that were recommended to this Court by the Legislative Commission on Statutory Mandates in its December 31, 2009 Report. The Michigan Townships Association appeared before the Commission to provide our perspectives on the subject of unfunded mandates. We believe strongly that unfunded state mandates erode the belief that Michigan citizens have in their right to compel government obligations.

We have observed in particular the experiences of school districts that have attempted to secure remedies for the state's violations of the Headlee Amendment, only to be subjected to court proceedings that have dragged on for years. The suggested rule changes would help to eliminate ambiguities and gaps in the current Court rules regarding the handling of Headlee Amendment claims. The Commission's recommendations regarding incorporation of existing trial court rules governing such matters as discovery, pre-trial motions and other pre-trial functions would provide needed procedural guidance to both litigants and the Court of Appeals. Similarly, the suggested amendments to make specific provision for the appointment of a special master to assist the Court of Appeals in resolving any underlying factual disputes makes sense and will make all interested parties aware of the availability of this tool.

We respectfully request that the Commission's recommendations for changes in the court rules be adopted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "G. Lawrence Merrill".

G. Lawrence Merrill  
Executive Director

